

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 HELSIN 02043 091037Z

13

ACTION EUR-10

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P R 090945Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7949

INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 2043

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FI, US, UR

SUBJECT: PUBLICATION OF AMERICAN 1948 SECRET

DISPATCHES CASUSES STIR IN FINLAND

SUMMARY: FINNISH NEWSPAPERS HAVE PICKED UP MATERIAL RELEASED IN DEPARTMENT FOREIGN RELATIONS SERIES 1948 VOLUM 4 SECRET DISPATCHES FROM HELSINKI, STOCKHOLM AND MOSCOW CONCERNING 1948 FINNISH-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP PACT. ONE OF PRINCIPAL PERSONS CONCERNED, FORMER PM FAGERHOLM HAS CLAIMED IN PRESS INTERVIEW THAT FACTS CONCERNING HIM COMPLETELY OPPOSITE TO THOSE REPORTED BY AMERICAN MINISTER IN 1948. SO FAR PRESS COMMENT HAS BEEN LIMITED, BUT THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT BOTH FAGERHOLM AND HIS SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED BY CONTENT OF RELEASED DOCUMENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE EDITOR OF NON-SOCIALIST FINNISH PERIODICAL KANAVA, SEIKKO ESKOLA, IN LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT CHANCE UPON VOLUME 4, 1948, EASTERN EUROPE; THE SOVIET UNION OF DEPARTMENT'S FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES SERIES. ESKOLA FOUND CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HELSIN 02043 091037Z

PAGES 759 TO 787 PARTICULARLY FASCINATING AND DECIDED

TO USE MATERIAL TO COUNTERBALANCE ANIT-US ARTICLE ON CHILE IN HIS PERIODICAL WITH SUMMARY OF RELEASED SECRET AMERICAN DISPATCHES. ASSISTANT PROFESSOR LAURI HYVAMAKI WROTE A RATHER THOROUGH ARTICLE CONCENTRATING ON THE MATERIAL RELATING TO VARIOUS CONTACTS OF FINNISH OFFICIALS WITH AMERICAN, BRITISH AND FRENCH REPRESENTATIVES CONCERNING THE 1948 FINNISH-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP PACT NEGOTIATIONS.

2. SHORTLY AFTER PUBLICATION OF KANAVA ARTICLE, LEADING CONSERVATIVE NEWSPAPER UUSI SUOMI PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 3 A SUMMARY WITHOUT COMMENT.

3. OF THOSE FINNS WHO ARE MORE EXTENSIVELY QUOTED OR MENTIONED IN THE VARIOUS SECRET TELEGRAMS, THE MOST PROMINENT WHO IS STILL ALIVE IS FORMER PRIME MINISTER, SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT, AND LEADING SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY FIGURE, KARL-AGUST FAGERHOLM. FAGERHOLM, 72, HAS BEEN RETIRED FROM ACTIVE POLITICS OR GOVERNMENT SINCE 1968. ACCORDING TO MINISTER WARREN'S TELEGRAM (PAGES 761 TO 764) FAGERHOLM HAD REQUESTED WARREN TO SEE HIM. FAGERHOLM HAD ALSO, AMONG OTHER POINTS, "EXPLAINED THAT ANY AIDS TO FINLAND'S ECONOMY WILL STRENGTHEN FINLAND'S POSITION IN STALLING OFF THE SOVIETS. IF THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT COULD BE CERTAIN THAT REPARATION DELIVERIES AND OTHER OBLIGATIONS INCURRED UNDER THE PEACE TREATY COULD BE MADE TO THE FULL SATISFACTION OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE FORTIFIED IN ITS STRUGGLE TO PREVENT ANY ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION".

4. WHETHER AS A MEANS OF COMING TO THE AID OF FAGERHOLM, AS ONE OTHER NEWSPAPER HAS CLAIMED, OR SEIZING ON THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO WREST AN INTERVIEW FROM THE USUALLY RELUCTANT FAGERHOLM, LEADING INDEPENDENT HELSINGIN SANOMAT ON OCTOBER 6 CARRIED FULL-PAGE LENGTHY INTERVIEW ARTICLE IN WHICH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HELSIN 02043 091037Z

FAGERHOLM, AMONG OTHER THINGS, STRONGLY REJECTED THE CLAIMS OF MINISTER WARREN, SAYING THAT HE, WARREN, HAD TURNED MATTERS COMPLETELY UPSIDE DOWN. FAGERHOLM CLAIMS THAT HE NEVER ASKED WARREN TO SEE HIM, BUT THAT WARREN ASKED FOR AN APPOINTMENT. FAGERHOLM ALSO CLAIMS THAT HE HAD NO BUSINESS WITH WARREN AND THAT IN REPLY TO WARREN'S CONCERN ABOUT THE FRIENDSHIP PACT NEGOTIATIONS, HE HAD SAID THAT

THE FINNS WERE ALSO CONCERNED BUT THAT IF THE SOVIET UNION WANTS SUCH A PACT, FINLAND PROBABLY HAS NO POSSIBILITY TO OPPOSE IT. ACCORDING TO FAGERHOLM, HE HAD TOLD WARREN THAT IT ALL DEPENDED ON THE CONTENTS WHICH ACCORDING TO THEIR INFORMATION WERE NOT IMPOSSIBLE. FAGERHOLM STATES THAT WARREN DID NOT ACCEPT THIS LINE OF THOUGHT. IN WARREN'S OPINION THE FINNS SHOULD NOT AGREE TO SUCH A PACT. FAGERHOLM'S FINAL POINT ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE HELSINGIN SANOMAT ARTICLE READS IN FREE TRANSLATION, "WHEN I, SLIGHTLY AMUSED BY WARREN'S AGGRESSIVENESS, ASKED WHO WOULD HELP US IN A CONFLICT SITUATION, HE UNHESITATINGLY ANSWERED: USA. TO MY MIND THE WHOLE THING WAS SO CHILDISH THAT I DID NOT CONTINUE THE DISCUSSION, BUT NOTED THAT IT WAS BEST IF WE WERE ALLOWED TO TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN MATTERS".

5. SINCE THE OCTOBER 6 HELSINGIN SANOMAT INTERVIEW ARTICLE THERE HAS ONLY BEEN ONE FURTHER PRESS COMMENT. THIS APPEARED OCTOBER 8 IN FELLOW TRAVELLER RADICAL SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST-SUPPORTED PAIVAN UTUSET, WHERE ITS COLUMNIST ESKONEN ATTACKS FAGERHOLM FOR HAVING GONE BEHIND THE BACK OF HIS COUNTRY IN NEGOTIATING WITH FOREIGN POWERS AND ACCEPTING INSTRUCTIONS AND EVEN ECONOMIC SUPPORT FROM THEM. ESKONEN CLAIMS THAT FAGERHOLM HAS BEEN UNMASKED AS COLLABORATOR WITH WEST. ESKONEN ENDS HIS COLUMN BY SAYING THAT THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE IN THE AUTHENTICITY OF WARREN'S REPORTS WHICH WERE "WRITTEN RIGHT AFTER THE DISCUSSION", RATHER THAN IN FAGERHOLM'S MEMORY ABOUT MATTERS THAT TRANSPIRED ALMOST 30 YEARS AGO.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HELSIN 02043 091037Z

6. LOCAL UPI MAN IS PREPARING ARTICLE ON SUBJECT BECAUSE HE EXPECTS FURTHER ARTICLES IN NOT ONLY FINNISH PRESS BUT ALSO IN SWEDISH, WEST GERMAN, AND US PRESS, INCLUDING, ACCORDING TO HIM, IN ALL LIKELIHOOD NEW YORK TIMES. THUS, IT SEEMS QUITE LIKELY THAT WE HAVE NOT HEARD THE LAST OF THIS STORY.

7. AT THIS POINT, UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE, EMBASSY INTENDS TO RESTRICT REPLIES TO POSSIBLE QUERIES TO SIMPLE COMMENT THAT THE DOCUMENTS IN QUESTION ARE AN OFFICIAL, IF PARTIAL, HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE PERIOD IN QUESTION.

8. COMMENT: IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL WHETHER THIS

ISSUE WILL MUSHROOM INTO ACRIMONIOUS PUBLIC DEBATE OR
MUD-SLINGING IN THE FINNISH PRESS. IT IS ALSO TOO
EARLY TO TELL WHETHER RELEASE OF THESE DOCUMENTS
WILL MAKE PRESENT-DAY FINNISH OFFICIALS AND LEADERS
WARY OF TALKING TO US. SO FAR WE HAVE NOT HAD ANY
FLAK ON THIS FROM THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OR ANYONE
ELSE.
HOUSTON

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